

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0584

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 05429

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, UK, UR

SUBJECT: AFRICAN ASPECTS OF GROMYKO'S LONDON VISIT

REF: A) LONDON 4767 (NOTAL); B) STATE 82487 (NOTAL)

1. WE HAVE LITTLE TO ADD TO THE DESCRIPTION OF THE CALLAGHAN/GROMYKO TALKS DESCRIBED IN REFTEL A. ESSENTIALLY, THE FOREIGN SECRETARY LECTURED HIS VISITOR ON AN ISSUE WHICH GROMYKO WOULD NOT ADMIT EXISTED. CALLAGHAN INSISTED THAT "DETENTE IS INDIVISIBLE" AND THAT "EUROPE IS NOT IMMUNE TO DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA." GROMYKO IN EFFECT ACKNOWLEDGED THESE PRINCIPLES WITH AN INNOCENCE AND ATTITUDE THAT SEEMED TO ASK, "BUT WHY ARE YOU TELLING THESE THINGS TO ME?" CALLAGHAN'S GENERAL AD-
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MONISHMENTS ABOUT SOVIET ACTIVITY IN AFRICA THEREFORE

FAILED TO PROVOKE A DIRECT AND DETAILED RESPONSE FROM THE RUSSIAN. GROMYKO STATED OBLIQUELY THAT A) HE COULD, OF COURSE, ONLY SPEAK FOR SOVIET POLICY IN AFRICA AND NOT FOR THE POLICIES OF ANY OTHER NATIONS, AND B) SOVIET POLICY COULD NOT RULE OUT RUSSIAN ASSISTANCE TO LEGITIMATE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS.

2. SPECIFIC DISCUSSIONS DURING THE TALKS CENTERED ON THE CLARIFICATION OF MPLA TERMS FOR SOUTH AFRICAN WITHDRAWAL FROM SOUTHERN ANGOLA. IN THESE EXCHANGES, GROMYKO ATTEMPTED TO DEMONSTRATE SOVIET HELPFULNESS AND COOPERATION AND THEREBY UNDERScore THAT THE RUSSIANS HAVE NO ULTERIOR MOTIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND IN FACT ACTIVELY SEEK TO PACIFY THE SITUATION IN THAT REGION.

3. GROMYKO'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON AFRICA SUCH AS HIS BELIEF THAT PROBLEMS IN THE CONTINENT "COULD BE RESOLVED CONSTRUCTIVELY" AND THAT SO FAR AS RUSSIA IS CONCERNED "RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA ARE JUST NAMES ON THE MAP" REFLECTED HIS LINE IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. FCO OFFICIALS CHARACTERIZED THE POSTURE OF THE RUSSIAN DELEGATION AS "DEFENSIVE" ON AFRICAN QUESTIONS. THEY, NEVERTHELESS, BELIEVE GROMYKO LEFT LONDON WITH A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE BRITISH ATTITUDE ON DETENTE AND ITS RELATION TO DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA.

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